NAQCC News

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1. JULY CHALLENGE: This is the second running of our Poker challenge. Several members found it intriguing when we had our debut of this challenge last year. We hope more will find it so this year. The rules are a tad complicated so be sure to study them before you delve into this challenge. If anything is not clear to you, ask us, and we will try to explain as best we can. This challenge was first suggested by Randy KB4QQJ.

Basically you make poker hands using the number and letters in call signs of stations you work. The four suits are A,K,N,and W. The numbers are the cards with 1-6 being regular cards, 7,8,9 being our 'face' cards and a 0 being an Ace. More on the rules page.

As you should do for every challenge, sprint, and award, read and understand the rules completely before you do anything. Here in the newsletters we just give a brief synopsis of what's going on.

Full Challenge info here.

2. JUNE SPRINTS RESULTS: That's not a typo in the heading - we did have two sprints in June as you should know. Let's cover our special mW sprint first since it doesn't involve much in the way of statistics since we don't cross-check logs for NAQCC special sprints as we do for our regular sprints.

The mW sprint had entries in both the SWA and GAIN categories. The SWA winner was K9JWV who operated portable from Michigan where conditions were better than elsewhere. Most other places had moderate to severe thunderstorms in the area with the resultant high QRN that obliterated most all QRPp signals. The GAIN category was won by its only entrant, John K4BAI. There were 15 logs submitted altogether, well down from the 29 received from last June's similar sprint. This will probably be our last June mW sprint. We will be having

others, but in the more static-free cold weather months.

Our regular June sprint suffered from slightly poorer conditions than our May sprint, but was quite successful nevertheless. 20M was good for a good portion of the sprint this month and we had a record number of QSO's on that band for one of our sprints. 40M was good for the first hour basically, then went downhill the last hour. 80M as expected, suffered from the usual summer QRN.

Here now are the full statistics clearly showing the good turnout we had despite the conditions.

STATS - current month, previous month, all time record, mo/yr (blue indicates a record set this month):

	Jun	May	Rec	Month
Logs -	57	65	65	5/09 &4/09
Autologger logs -	52	59	59	5/09
Stns in logs -	92	106	110	5/08
Hour 1 QSO's -	393	557	564	9/08
Hour 2 QSO's -	350	464	476	9/08
Total QSO's -	743	1021	1040	9/08
20M QSO's -	209	137	209	6/09
40M QSO's -	491	720	720	5/09
80M QSO's -	43	137	481	12/07

WINNERS:

1st SWA East - N7UN
1st SWA Central - NB4M
1st SWA Mountain - WY7N
1st SWA Pacific - n/a
1st Gain - K4BAI

Special Award (portable operation)
Drawing Entrants: KD0V, K9JWV
Drawing Winner: K9JWV

Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Actually everyone who participated and sent in a log is a winner because that shows the ham radio world that there are many folks still using and enjoying CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

Very special thanks to those who reported their results even though they made only a few QSO's. Your reports are important also.

We had 8 stations who didn't submit a log show up 5-12 times in the 57 logs we received and cross-checked. Hopefully those 8 and many others will be back next month AND submit a log. Remember submitting a log doubles the strength of your statement that you support CW operation.

We welcome these hams who submitted a sprint log for the first time. We hope they will continue to participate and report their results:
K5ENA, KB8FE, KH6OZ, VE5DC, W0EA, W5YDM, W7GVE, W8SH, W9WE

Full sprint info here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- Here are some stats for you to ponder. The first column is the USA call area, the second column the number of NAQCC members residing in that call area, the next column the number of ops from that call area who have signed up to operate our special event 5th anniversary calls in October, and finally the ops from that area who have signed up. What's wrong with the picture?

1 - 220 - 4 - KQ1P, W1OH, K1YAN, KG1W
2 - 219 - 2 - KA2KGP, N2COD
3 - 252 - 4 - WY3H, K3WWP, AF3Z, W0EJ
4 - 689 - 4 - WA3ZBJ, KF4WK, KM6NN, KJ4EXC
5 - 374 - 1 - KD5KJ
6 - 231 - 0
7 - 345 - 2 - WY7N, KH6OZ
8 - 282 - 0
9 - 248 - 1 - N9AKF
0 - 333 - 1 - KD0V

There's a large pool of ops out there in 6 and 8 lands. Surely at least a couple of you are interested in having fun with the operation of a special event call. Also we could use extra ops from 5,9, and 0 lands as one person can't be on the air all the time during our anniversary week.

Tom and I went to a lot of work and trouble to secure 10 separate special event calls (N1A through N0A) for this year's anniversary celebration and we'd hate to see the N6A and N8A calls go unused after all our efforts.

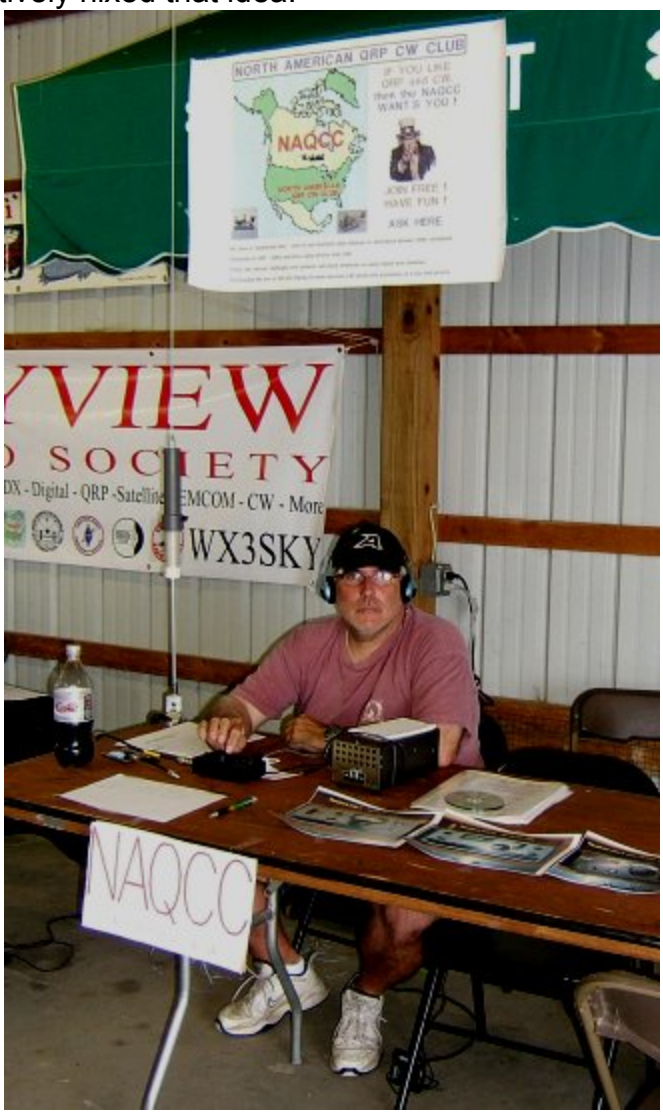
Anyone at all can easily handle a special event call operation, from the seasoned CW veteran, to the most raw newcomer to CW. So don't have any trepidation about signing up to help out. We'll provide step by step instructions covering all the minor little details involved, and help you out as much as we can. However basically it's just a matter of operating your station as you usually do, but using the N1A, N2A, etc. call instead of your own call.

So please email and tell us your interested. We want to have a great anniversary week this October 12-18. Thank you.

- We're continuing with the hidden call sign idea suggested by Bill KB3XS. Somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member. Not to be confused with the many other call signs in the newsletter, this one will be in a place that is definitely out of context and will contain a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email us and win 100 NAQCC QSL cards donated by KB3XS. If it is NOT your call sign, and you find it, all you get is the personal satisfaction of finding it, nothing else. A call sign is only used once whether the ham finds it or not. So far neither of the two first call signs have been found by their owner, including the latest one, KA3TNS. Good luck. Oh, and no use using your browser's search feature to find it. That won't work.

- Tom WY3H, his sons Ethan W3IRS and Ariel (no call yet), Mike KC2EGL and John K3WWP had a great time manning the table at the Butler hamfest back on June 7th. It was rewarding meeting quite a few of our NAQCC members and signing up a few new members as

well. About an hour into the hamfest we added a check-in sheet for members to sign, so we missed a few who visited before we had the check-in sheet available. Thanks to the following who signed in: K8ZT, K3RKC, W3BBO, KA3VGH, W3DMB, K3OXG, KB3AAG, WC3O, K3HPS, KA2KGP and N2COD. The last two are brothers from NY who as you probably know are very active in club activities, and were nice enough to make a beautiful banner that we use when the NAQCC sets up at hamfests. You can see the banner in the following picture showing Mike KC2EGL on duty. You may also note that Mike has his KX-1 rig and a portable antenna set up. We had hoped to make a couple QSO's as a demo, but we got stuck inside a metal building that effectively nixed that idea.



And here are a couple more pictures from the hamfest taken by Tom KA2KGP. The first shows K3WWP manning the table as Tom's brother Mike N2COD stands by. The second shows Tom WY3H (seated) assisting in grading exams as a VE in the test center at Butler.

- We need articles for our newsletter. If you would like to write something about QRP and or

CW that relates to the NAQCC and its activities, we would be glad to publish it. Some article ideas might be ones concerning strategies for our sprints, review of a QRP rig you use in our club activities, story of the keys you use in our club activities, just about anything you can think of that relates to the guidelines above. Send them to our club news editor Paul **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. As we approach 4,000 members in the club, there are bound to be many of you who have writing talent and would produce some very interesting material for the newsletter.

- We're almost set to announce the winner of the ARRL Wire Antenna book donated by John K3WWP. It goes to the one who recruited the most new members between January 1 and June 30 this year. So there are still a few days left to recruit. The field is very wide open still, so a couple recruits in the last few days could vault you into the winner's circle. To be counted as a recruiter, you must be listed as the source in our membership application form so make it clear to anyone you recruit he must put your call sign there when he fills out the form and joins the club.

- Gregg WB8LZG has donated more items to the club to be given away, so watch the giveaways page in the main section of the club web site to see how we decide to give them away.

- We occasionally get requests from folks to use material from our newsletters or the club web site for hc003 their own newsletters or web sites. It's perfectly OK to go ahead and do so IF the following conditions are met:
1. The NAQCC must be clearly indicated as the source of the material.
2. A link to the NAQCC web site should be included along with the material.

- Steve KT5H writes the following which also included some personal material to me (K3WWP) that I won't include. "The point to all of this (I'm getting to it) is to say "thanks" to you and the others who formed the NAQCC... This group promotes exactly what I enjoy the most, and I appreciate the ability to fellowship with those of a like spirit." Thank you Steve. We're glad we are catering so nicely to the desires of our members. Incidentally we prefer being called a club instead of a group since groups these days tend to be associated with the Internet, and we want our members to make CW on the ham bands their preferred means of communication, not Internet Chat Rooms, Reflectors, and the like.

- Mike KC2EGL sends this info: July 1st to July 4th 2009, all thirteen 1776 original colonies will be on the air. One S.E. station per Colony state. A full color certificate printed on heavy card stock or parchment paper, with a map and the state flags of all the 1776 colony states will be available to to each station who works one or more or ALL of the Special Event stations. Each colony state worked will be marked by the shield of the United States by each state flag. Special event call signs will be used. Website: http://home.comcast.net/~dzabawa/ThirteenColonies.htm

- Acting on a suggestion by Russ N9IV, we've implemented a new award. It's called the KMPW 100 Award, and is issued to anyone who has made or will make 100 or more 1000 miles per watt QSO's. We believe this is an award unique to the NAQCC. Russ mentioned he suggested the award to other clubs who turned down his request. See the Awards section of the web site on the Current awards page for a link to our rules. Russ has the option of being the first recipient of the award, and K3WWP will then take award #2. Both have already (over)qualified for the award. Then we will be issuing awards starting with #3 to other members.

4. ELMER PROJECT: From John K3WWP - We didn't receive a report from Karl or Ron for this issue of the newsletter. I can tell you that the Slow Speed Net Sunday evenings on 7.122 MHz has been going well although a bit slow with the nice weather and outdoor activities as competition. Karl mentioned we had a DX check-in from Norway on one of the recent nets. If you're available Sunday evening at 8:30 PM EDT (Monday 0030Z), we hope you will join in. Remember it's a learning net so you don't have to worry if you have never checked into a net before. Just follow Karl's call-up instructions and send your call when he ends with a 'K'. The CW speed will be adjusted to fit your copying skills. We're proud of this feature and hope it will become more and more popular as a CW training feature of the NAQCC. Oh, and we allow 'cheating' here. Karl will operate more than QRP power if necessary for all check-ins to copy him.

Remember also that Karl has a list of Elmer's who are willing to help on a individual basis, all you have to do is drop Karl an e-mail to pix email n3jjr (1K) and he would be glad to hook you up with a Elmer.

Our Elmer project is starting to roll now, and we need you to keep up the momentum.

If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**
N3IJR - pix email n3jjr (1K)
Also see Elmer Project on the web site.

5. AWARD WINNERS THE PAST TWO MONTHS:

1000 MPW:
#0056 - K7HV
#0057 - VE6RI
#0058 - K7OLU

2XQRP:
N8ZYA - 50 pts - Web site listing

30-30 Magnum:
#0004 - GW0VSW

Alphabet Prefix:
USA #0007 - N8XMS
USA #0008 - WY7N

A nice pick-up of interest in our NAQCC awards as more and more folks discover just how much fun it is to work towards a goal and achieve it. Also a great way to improve one's CW skills which is very important. Not to mention that working towards our awards increases activity on the CW bands which is very important.

One award that hasn't generated much interest is our fairly new Suffix Words award. This is given for working hams whose suffix of their call spells out a word - W3CAT, K4DOG, and so on. This award was suggested by George KN2GSJ (now-K2GHM) #2382. I thought this was a delightful award since I always enjoyed working such calls, especially before the days of vanity calls, when such word calls were just assigned by luck to the holder. We use a popular Scrabble dictionary to decide just what constitues a 'word'. We hope you'll check out and work

for this award.

Remember also our incentive to work towards and earn our NAQCC awards thanks to Gregg WB8LZG. Gregg has donated a set of beautiful knob inserts for the K1 and K2 rigs. The Giveaways page in the main section of the web site has more info and a picture. You can win one by earning and applying for any TWO of the following NAQCC awards. It's first come, first served, so make haste.

QSO-A-DAY
30-30
Alphabet Prefix
Worked Members - Advanced
Suffix Words

Check the 'Current' page in the 'Awards' section of the web site for rules for these awards.

Only new applicants on or after October 1, 2008 are eligible.

See the member news article by Paul N8XMS below to see how one of the knobs looks on his K1 rig. Paul was the second winner of a knob, following Steve NU7T.

Full List of all award winners here.

6. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS: This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is Jul 9. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window.

- **From Mike KC2EGL #1236 -** Today (June 24) John K3WWP and I first went out to set up my Field Day site which consisted of a tent, table, and chairs. He also helped run coax for my antenna feed line. Later in the day after lunch we went up to the Kittanning Community Park and tested two portable antennas with my Elecraft KX-1. We found that both antennas will work just fine on the bands they were designed to work with the KX-1. When doing your antenna testing, make sure you bring a set of headphones just in case you feel like trying to work someone. With 64 years combined experience, both of us forgot to bring along the headphones. Other than the missing headphones, it was an enjoyable day.

- **From Paul N8XMS #675 -** Over the past two years I have been fortunate enough to win three or four prizes in various NAQCC challenges and sprints. My two favorite prizes are the little wooden shack accessories made and donated by WB8LZG. The paddle pieces are fantastic on my Black Widow kit-built paddle, and the knob insert adds a bit of class to my K1. If only I could be this lucky in the lottery! My thanks to WB8LZG and to all at the NAQCC!

- **From John N8ZYA #2279 -** I've had several club members ask for a "picture" of my "straight key". It was sent to me "free of charge" from the estate of a VERY generous Silent Key. He (the person in charge of the estate) had specific requests that he always remain "anonymous" and I will always honor that request.

Many months ago, I mentioned that I was using a $14.95 "bargain key" on the air while in a QSO with another ham. I was just "rag chewing" (something I live to do) and he asked if my info was good on the "QRZ dot Com" site. I sez yes (figuring he wanted to exchange cards via the Buro) but he then sez "I'll send you a REAL key".....NO charge!

It seems this is a key from the collection of a SK Ham, which stipulated that it be given to a "deserving ham" at NO charge, and also with the stipulation that he remain forever anonymous.

He was adamant about this.... and I will always honor this request of secrecy. It still brings tears to my eyes when I think about this gift. The only request (from the holder of the key) was a nice letter be written to the widow of the ham. (I sent it immediately).

This is what I mean by the camaraderie and brotherhood of CW operators. It's not only a RARE key but to me, it's priceless. I will also pass this key along to another Ham in my VERY senior years.

After a little research, I believe this key (serial number on the underside at top) is a Bunnell Steel Lever Key produced in the early 1900's. The original keys were "solid brass" (even the center lever) but they didn't "wear" well because of the softness of the metal. The "improved model" used a steel center lever to increase longevity.

I'm by no means an "expert" on classic keys, and I could be wrong about the manufacturer, but regardless of the authenticity, It will always be a "special key" that I will always cherish.

This 100-year-old key is "priceless" and I use it every day that I'm on the air.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.